

both than of earth, and the actors in them should be only the devils themselves. Yet, alas for human nature in the fallen state! these are the doings of our fellow-men, who have the same passions with ourselves.—Grace has made us to differ from them. The gospel has saved us and our children from scenes of equal if not similar violence and oppression. And the same gospel and grace shall be the means of redeeming long-oppressed, miserable Africa.

A better day is now dawning on this dark land. Varied and powerful agencies are already at work, to restrain existing evils, and to set up the kingdom of righteousness and peace. Amongst these we must reckon as greatly important the naval squadron, nobly maintained for a long time single-handed by the British Government, for the suppression of the slave-trade. In later years the American and the French governments have each maintained a small naval force on the African coast for the same object. As the slave-vessels carried arms and were commonly of a piratical character, and as the traffic in which they were employed was one that could not flourish side by side with legitimate commerce, civilization, or religion, a naval force for their banishment became a vital measure. Without it, colonial settlements, factories for trade in ivory and palm oil, and missionary stations with their schools and churches, were all alike impracticable. The slave-traders would soon have swept all these from the African coast. The question concerning the employment of the squadron has many bearings, which it is not within the design of this work to discuss, but it is clear that no single measure has born of greater benefit to all that is good in the temporal condition of the Africans. It has proved of essential service to all other means of promoting their welfare.

Other important means are not wanting. The British and American settlements of Sierra Leone, and Liberia are objects of great interest to all who have at heart the welfare of the African race. The colony at Sierra Leone was formed in 1787 for the purpose of trade with the Africans, and its first settlers were a few hundreds of colored people from America, most of whom were refugees who had left the United States at the end of the Revolutionary War. The chief increase, however, in the population of the colony grew out of the measures adopted by the British government for the extinction of the slave-trade. It became necessary to provide a home for the recaptured slaves. It was impossible to restore them to their former abodes. The native villages of many were far distant in the interior; the homes of others had been destroyed, and their friends dispersed. Others still, in large numbers, were children not able to tell where their former homes could be found; and in many instances their parents and friends had been killed, or reduced to slavery, so that they were left as orphans. These poor people, when rescued from the grasp of slave-dealers, were settled at Sierra Leone, under the protection and laws of the British government. Here their numbers gradually increased, until now the population of the colony is estimated at about 70,000. They have here enjoyed the advantages of education and the means of grace. Thousands of them have become worthy members of the Church of Christ, and they have acquired the ideas and the arts of civilized life. Freetown, the capital of the colony, is far in advance of any other town on the western coast, as the abode of intelligence, comfort, and gospel privileges.

One remarkable result of this settlement was not probably anticipated by its earliest friends,—that of its being a kind of normal or training school for many African tribes. The liberated slaves were natives of different regions. They had their distinctive customs, and various languages were spoken amongst them. When brought under Christian influence, it was soon found to be more difficult to rescue them from their pagan superstitions than from slavery; but when made partakers of the grace of God, they could not but desire to see the blessings of the gospel extended to their own people. Some of them have already become useful in this good work, others will follow their example, and the light of this African Christian settlement will penetrate far into the interior of the country.

Besides Sierra Leone, the British government possess trading settlements, under the protection of the squadron and a small force of troops, at several other places on the coast. Of these, the settlements on the Gambia, and at Cape Coast and Accra, on the Gold Coast, are the most important. The missionary labors carried on at these smaller places have been attended with marked success.

The Liberia settlements differ from Sierra Leone in their origin and object, though their influence on Africa itself, we may hope, will eventually prove not less beneficial. The Liberians, properly so called, not being natives of Africa, cannot at first speak the languages of the native tribes. When they reach the land of their forefathers, they are vastly superior to the re-captured slaves in character and intelligence; but though of the same race, they are nevertheless foreigners, who have been brought up in a much colder climate, and they must therefore pass the ordeal of acclimation, and begin life anew. Serious risks attend this great change in their condition, one of which grows out of their new political relations. They have adopted the republican form of government, which more than all others requires its citizens to possess intelligence and integrity. From their former position, and by reason also of the frontier kind of life in which, as colonists with limited means, they are now placed, it would be unreasonable to expect that many of them should be capable at once of self-government. We are not, therefore, surprised to see the same man in office as Governor and President for many years in succession; it must be difficult to find men qualified to be the chief magistrate of the republic, and to fill the inferior but important

stations of legislators and judges. All this shows the essential importance of Christian schools in Liberia, while the narrow means of most of the settlers render it necessary for the present that these schools, and also the support of the Christian ministry, should be largely indebted to the missionary institutions of the United States. With a cordial and vigorous support from the American churches, we trust that Liberia, will not disappoint the expectations of its benevolent founders, and will become the favored home of thousands of our colored people. Their example and influence, if regulated by the spirit of the gospel, will make their adopted country a great blessing in many ways to the people of Africa and to the negro race. We look to both these Christian settlements, Sierra Leone and Liberia, with the deepest interest, as well adapted to repress the slave-trade and other evils, to foster legitimate commerce, and to furnish stations for missionary labor among the natives of the country; and our hopes are the more confident, because they are objects of special interest to the two great Protestant nations of our age. It must be for gracious purposes that God has planted these Christian settlements on the border of that dark continent, and enlisted for their prosperity the sympathies and prayers of so many of his people in Great Britain and our own country.

The naval squadrons and the colonial settlements have been enumerated as powerful agencies for the benefit of Western Africa. Hardly inferior to these is the commerce now springing up between foreign traders and the natives along this coast. The chiefs and other men of influence are beginning to find, that the labor of their dependents will procure for them a better supply of goods than could be obtained by traffic with slave-dealers. Their own interest is promoted by sending out of the country the productions of the soil and of the forest, rather than their fellow men. And Western Africa is extremely rich in the staples of commerce. It is capable of producing cotton to almost any extent. Rice and palm oil, ebony and other valuable kinds of wood, the gum used in India-rubber manufactures, ivory, and many other important articles of commerce, can be supplied in ample measure; while on the other hand, the Africans are an imitative and an "improving" people, anxious to possess articles of European and American manufacture, willing to work for them, and full of enterprise and ingenuity in using means to obtain them. With thirty-five millions of such a people, living in a country of exuberant fertility, at a distance of but a few weeks' sail from British and American exports, what can prevent an immense amount of commerce being created within no far-distant period!

But the principal means of Africa's redemption in the blessed gospel of the grace of God. This will effect the greatest changes, when other means prove fruitless. A divine power makes this agency effectual in the change of character, habits and pursuits. Under its influence, old things pass away, all things become new. This mighty heaven is already at work; its effects are visible and wonderful. The briefest statement of missionary returns will prove surprising to many, and gratifying to all, who have at heart the welfare of this long-neglected part of the world. The English Baptists, Episcopalians and Wesleyan Societies, the Scotch United Presbyterians, the German, the American Baptist, Congregational, Episcopal Methodist, and Presbyterian bodies are all engaged in missionary work in Western Africa. They support about eighty ministers of the gospel at different stations, with a considerable number of assistant missionaries. Over 11,500 communicants, including about 1,000 in Liberia who are mostly of American birth, were reported last year in connection with the churches. The greater part of these are members of the English Episcopal and Wesleyan churches in Sierra Leone; but over 1,600 are members of the English Wesleyan churches on the Gambia, at Cape Coast, and in the kingdom of Ashantee, and over 200 are members of English Episcopal churches in Abbeokuta and Badagry.—Considering the recent origin of most of the missions and the formidable hindrances to their success, these returns are most cheering. They appear to warrant the opinion, that in no part of the missionary field may the Church of Christ look for more immediate and extended success than in Western Africa.

The most serious obstacle to missionary labor in this part of the world is, the unhealthiness of the country to foreigners. The climate is not deleterious to the natives, who are described as physically a vigorous and long-lived people; but foreigners are subject to fevers which often prove fatal. Unusual mortality has marked the progress of the missionary work on this coast. This may have been owing partly to the want of proper care and treatment. The methods of guarding against disease and of dealing with it are better understood now than in former years. Much greater stress is now laid on the selection of missionaries with health suited to the climate, and the choice of stations not exposed to malaria from neighboring marshes or to other local causes of disease. As a result of these precautions, the instances of sickness and death have been diminished. It must be conceded, however, that the climate of this part of Africa will still prove more or less injurious to the health of those who have been brought up in northern latitudes. Yet this consideration should not receive more than its proper weight in the scale of Christian duty. The missionary work is surely worthy of greater sacrifices than the enterprises of men engaged in commerce or other secular pursuits, which now employ the services of some two thousand white people on the coast of Western Africa. The slave-traders for long years encountered the risks of the climate, living at all points on the coast, in the prosecution of their infamous business. The servants of Christ must not shrink from equal or greater danger in obeying his last commandment. He knew all the risks of climate when he required them